

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

June 9, 2009

Mr. W. Craig Fugate
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Administrator Fugate:

We learned with disappointment yesterday of FEMA's denial of Governor Riley's request for individual assistance in three counties affected by storms and flooding during the period of May 6 – 8, 2009. As the representatives for Autauga, Elmore, and Montgomery counties, we would respectively request a meeting with you to further discuss the reasoning behind your decision to deny these counties individual assistance.


While we understand that FEMA follows certain guidelines when making its declarations, we also saw first-hand the damage in our districts and many of our constituents are still struggling to repair their flood-damaged properties. Further exacerbating the problem is the fact that many storm victims lacked flood insurance, never believing they would need such insurance since they lived outside of a designated flood zone. This was, by definition, a true natural disaster for which no one could have been fully prepared.

Though the initial request was denied, there is a 30-day period in which the Governor can appeal FEMA's decision and present new information in support of said appeal. We look forward to working with the Governor and FEMA in the appeal process, and we hope that by meeting with you and other officials we will better understand the standards by which your decision was made and what factors could lead to its reversal.

In closing, the people of the Second and Third Districts of Alabama are proud, hard-working Americans who rarely, if ever, ask for any kind of government assistance. The flooding in our districts, however, appears to be a situation designed for FEMA to step in and lend a helping hand to some of our fellow citizens in need.

We look forward to your prompt response and meeting with you in the near future.

Sincerely,


Bobby Bright
Member of Congress


Mike Rogers
Member of Congress

cc: James A. Walke, Acting Assistant Administrator of the Disaster Assistance Directorate

Major Phillip May, FEMA Region IV Administrator